

IMPACT REPORT

15 – 19 JUNE 2026
In partnership with Animal Protection Society (APS) Samoa

OUR TEAM
VETERINARIANS

Team Lead: Dr Victoria Chapman
 Dr Cinzia Cordella, Dr Felicity Keenan

VET NURSES

Bubbles Otway, Michelle Schimanski, Letitia Saunders

CLINIC OUTCOMES

Desexing – dogs	107	Clinic hours total	45	TOTAL ANIMALS TREATED	176
Desexing – cats	24	Vet volunteer hours	135	VALUE OF SERVICES	NZ \$141,635.00
General medical cases	45	Vet nurse volunteer hours	135	The calculation is based on SPAW costs, donated products, administrative expenses, and professional services. While SPAW does not charge for services, donations are welcomed.	
Parvovirus vaccines	155	Admin volunteer hours	85		
Parasite treatments	665	Volunteer flights	6		

LEAD VET COMMENTARY

This trip, my second to Lalumanu and fourth to Samoa, was another highlight in my veterinary career. Animals presented for neutering, vaccinations/worming and consults have been increasing over the last few years and it is gratifying to see locals wanting to engage and get the best for their pets.

The groundwork Animal Protection Society (APS) Samoa and their communities put in beforehand definitely paid off. On the last two days we had more animals than we could manage, and had to stop the waitlist by 10.30am – not that that stopped more from coming! APS staff Tino and Leisha were incredible. They kept us updated on numbers, booked in the animals and made everything run smoothly.

Our team worked so hard, they were all amazing – no complaints – despite the searing heat and humidity. Luckily there was quite a bit of wind, which helped cool things down a few degrees, but did make for challenging surgical conditions!

We would be ready to start by 8.30am and were still operating at 5.30pm on a couple of days, including one evening in a village where we were told at 4.00pm that we had to be gone by 6.00pm due to a curfew. There were 15 animals still waiting, which had been waiting for hours. After some quick diplomacy we were able to carry on. But that was a big day!

A local organiser Fa'asega had co-ordinated some local women to participate and help, and we were able to involve several of them in washing instruments and helping with recovery. They genuinely wanted to help, and I was keen to have them involved, it's a valuable opportunity for welfare education.

On our final evening, Fa'asega and her helpers put on a lovely thanks and farewell for us, which I had not experienced before. I believe this is a sign of our strengthening relationship with the local community in the area and their gratitude for what we do. It was very special.

A highlight was seeing one of the dogs which we had speyed at the Taufua resort two years ago. She was in fantastic condition having had no more puppies to struggle to find food for. She was just a healthy, happy girl. It was a joy to see her thriving. Neutering works.

But the biggest highlight for me is working with a team of fantastic vets and nurses, who give it their all, come together to work seamlessly as a brand new team each time, in a pressure cooker situation. Every time I go, I think, this will be my last trip, but the friendships you develop and the laughs we have, make me want to come back and work with them again and again! This team with Cinzia from Italy (who didn't have a bag for four days and had to borrow clothes!), Flic, Michelle, Bubbles (who brought absolutely everything you might possibly need) and Letitia (from Melbourne), was no different, absolutely fabulous, you guys rocked – thank you 😊 SPAW clinics make happier animals and happy people too!

Dr Victoria Chapman
 Lead Veterinarian



VOLUNTEER STORY

I first felt inspired to volunteer with SPAW after seeing a video of Angela Glover helping Big Head, a homeless dog she and the SPAW team had cared for. Angela's compassion stayed with me, and in 2020, at 21, I booked my first volunteer trip to Tonga. Meeting her and witnessing her dedication firsthand was unforgettable. Angela tragically passed away in the 2022 Tonga tsunami while trying to save her dogs, and I feel privileged to have met her. While volunteering in Samoa, I often thought about her and the video that sparked everything for me. Her kindness motivated me to give back too, hoping I could make even a small difference as she did.

My June 2026 trip to Samoa was my second field placement with SPAW and my first time on the island. I knew island life could be unpredictable, but I was excited to see how animal care had progressed. I was struck by how healthy many animals were and how much their owners cared. There's still a long way to go, but the impact of SPAW's ongoing work was clear.

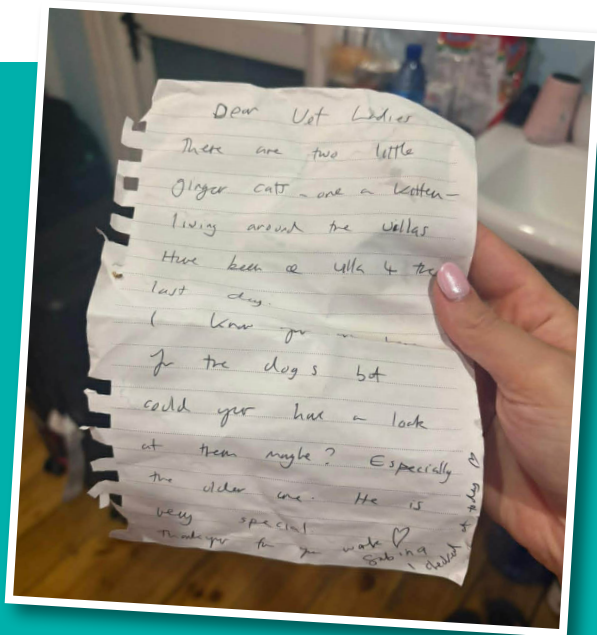
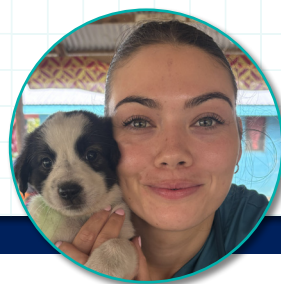
My team quickly became like family. We came from different backgrounds, but long days in the heat brought us close, and

I cried saying goodbye. The Samoan people were incredibly patient and grateful – some waited all day without complaint because they truly cared about their animals. The local women who volunteered with us were amazing; their help meant we could treat far more animals than we could have alone.

The moments that stayed with me most were helping mum dogs and cats still feeding their babies, knowing desexing meant a healthier future. And of course, the puppies – sweet, calm, full of personality – made the long, hot days lighter. I was amazed by how resilient the animals were, often heading home on the back of a ute as if nothing had happened.

Some of my favourite memories were outside the clinic: riding through villages, waving to people who always greeted us with smiles. It felt surreal and so special. If you're considering volunteering, just do it.

Letitia Saunders
Volunteer Vet Nurse



A SPECIAL REQUEST

One day the team came back from a village and there was a note on the door. It was written by some children staying at the Taufua Fales, asking the team if they could treat two kittens that were hanging around. Good news! The team managed to catch the cats and neuter them too – no more kittens for them!

MICHELLE AND MANI

Michelle is a repeat SPAW volunteer vet nurse. We are very happy that Michelle has finally managed to get Mani to New Zealand. The eight-month long process was not as straight forward as initially thought. Testing, medications, transportation and quarantine have mounted to \$10,000 in costs. After meeting this little dog during SPAW's 2025 clinic to Samoa, Michelle fell in love and named him Mani after the village he was from. Mani's life changed that day and he will now spend the rest of his life with love, food, medical care and a family who loves him.



Mani arrived into New Zealand on 5th July. Michelle would like to thank the APS team Leisha, Harriet and Tino for their help to prepare Mani for transportation and who cared for him, keeping him safe the past eight months. You can read Michelle's full story on our website.